THANOS
#2
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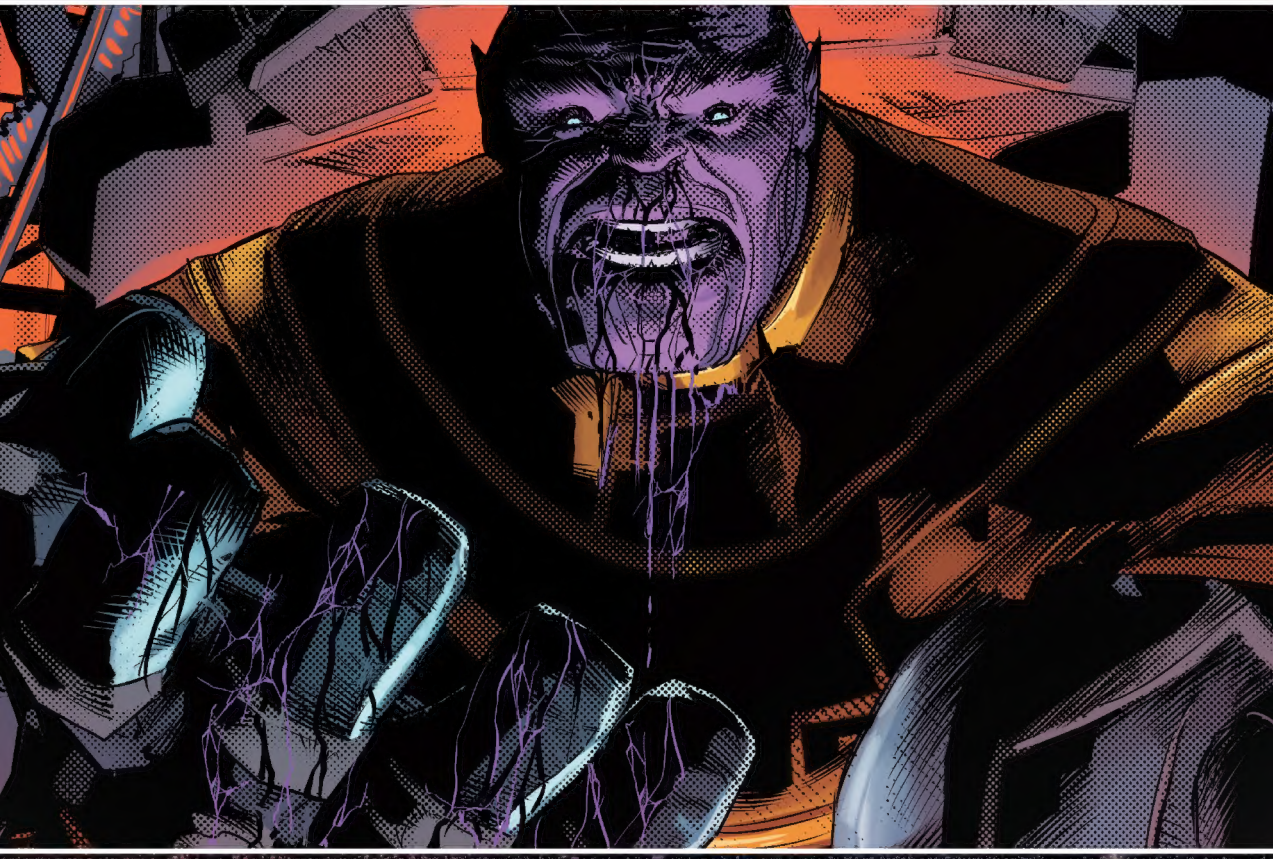
A total obsession with power drives him—to control the forces of the universe.
He is the Mad Titan. He is…

THANOS



After killing the usurper Corvus Glaive, Thanos has resumed his rightful seat as head of the Black Quadrant. And those who rule must contend with discontents—unbeknownst to Thanos, his son and onetime victim, Thane, has recruited a group of powerful individuals with just one goal: to kill Thanos. They are not the first to try, but they may be the last. In the entire galaxy, only Thane and his mysterious companion know that Thanos is dying.

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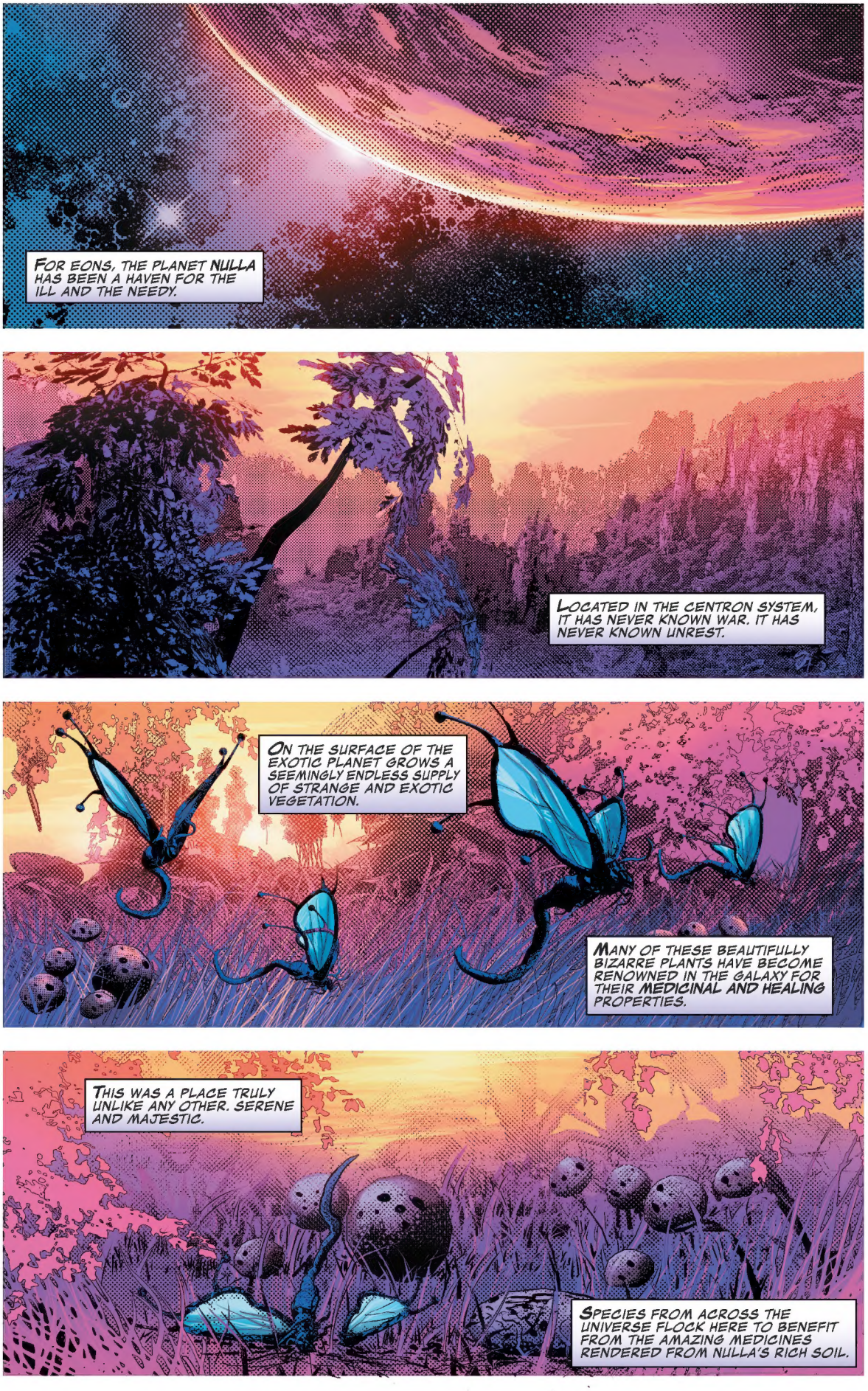
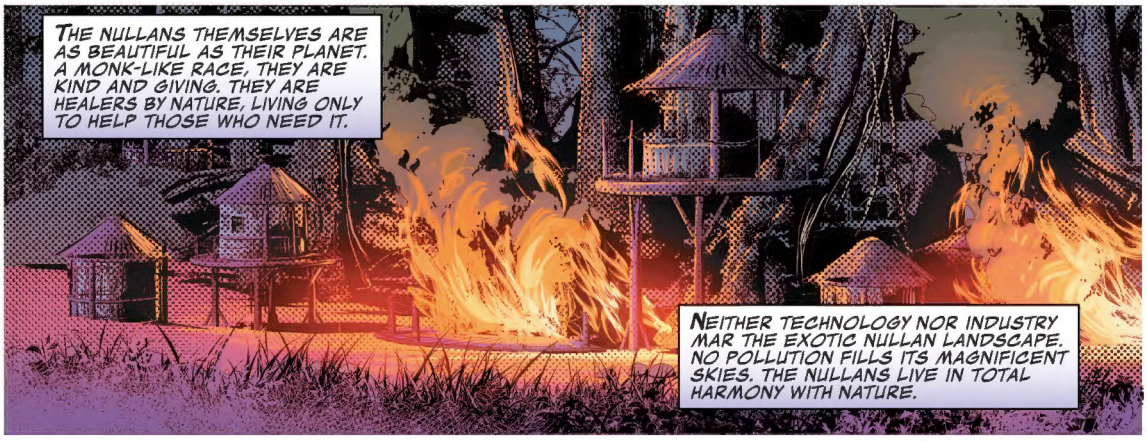
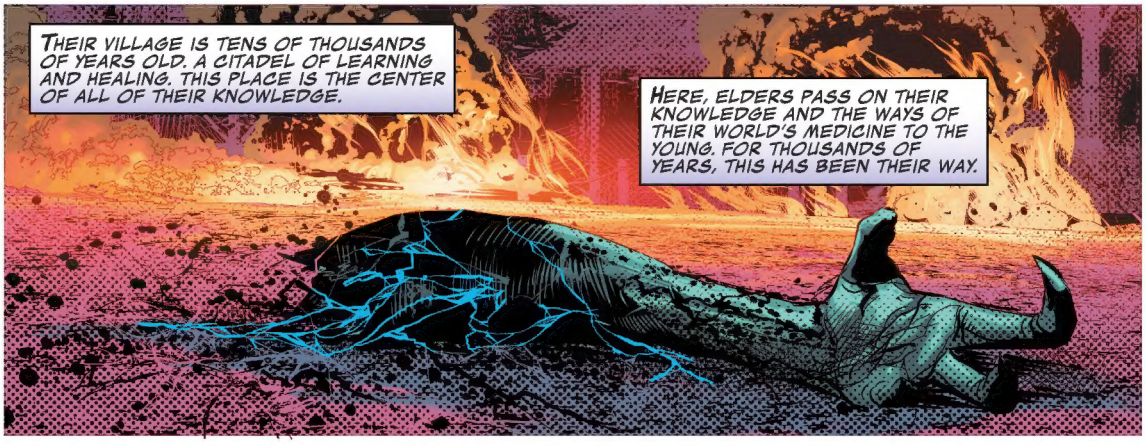
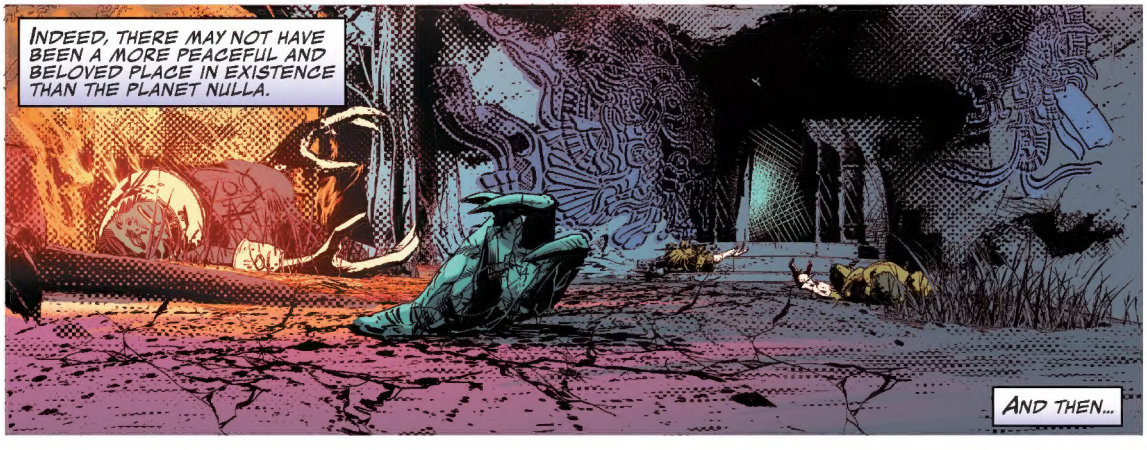

For eons, the planet NULLA has been a haven for the ill and the needy.
Located in the Centron system, it has never known war. It has never known unrest.
On the surface of the exotic planet grows a seemingly endless supply of strange and exotic vegetation.
Many of these beautifully bizarre plants have become renowned in the galaxy for their MEDICINAL AND HEALING properties.
This was a place truly unlike any other. Serene and majestic.
Species from across the universe flock here to benefit from the amazing medicines rendered from Nulla's rich soil.


THE NULLANS THEMSELVES ARE AS BEAUTIFUL AS THEIR PLANET. A MONK-LIKE RACE, THEY ARE KIND AND GIVING. THEY ARE HEALERS BY NATURE, LIVING ONLY TO HELP THOSE WHO NEED IT.
NEITHER TECHNOLOGY NOR INDUSTRY MAR THE EXOTIC NULLAN LANDSCAPE. NO POLLUTION FILLS ITS MAGNIFICENT SKIES. THE NULLANS LIVE IN TOTAL HARMONY WITH NATURE.

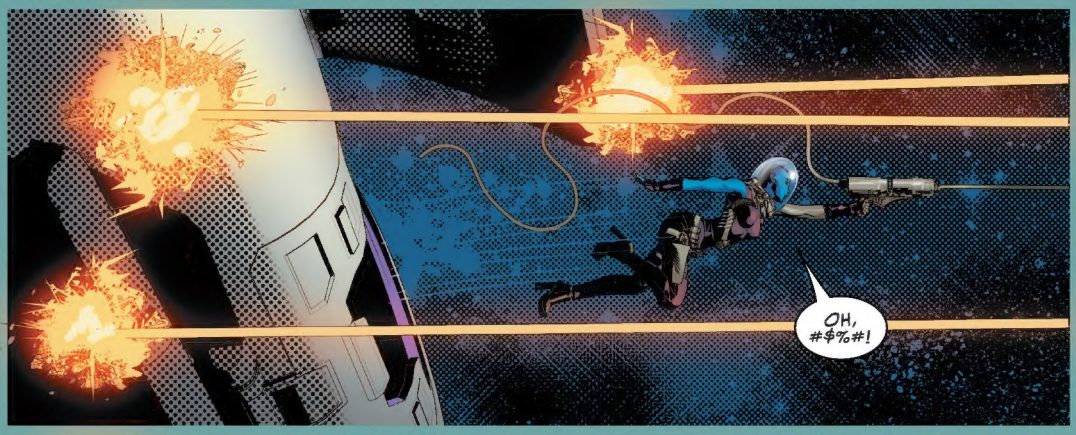

THEIR VILLAGE IS TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS OLD. A CITADEL OF LEARNING AND HEALING. THIS PLACE IS THE CENTER OF ALL OF THEIR KNOWLEDGE.
HERE, ELDERS PASS ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND THE WAYS OF THEIR WORLD'S MEDICINE TO THE YOUNG. FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, THIS HAS BEEN THEIR WAY.

AND WHEN THE ELDERS GROW WEAK AND TIRED, THE YOUNG NURSE THEM INTO THE NEXT LIFE. IT IS SAID THEIR SPIRITS ARE THEN ABSORBED INTO THE SOIL TO ONE DAY BE REBORN.

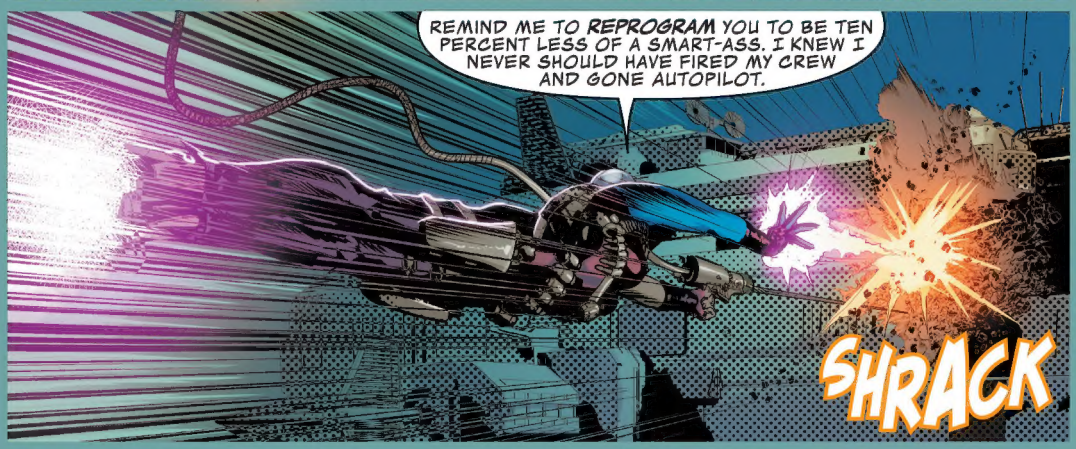

INDEED, THERE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A MORE PEACEFUL AND BELOVED PLACE IN EXISTENCE THAN THE PLANET NULLA.
AND THEN...

...THANOS.
AND THANOS IS DISPLEASED.

YOU SEE, THE MAD TITAN IS DYING, AND NOT EVEN THE NULLANS AND THEIR CENTURIES OF KNOWLEDGE COULD HELP HIM.
MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE GALAXY, AN UNEXPECTED REUNION IS ABOUT TO COMMENCE...
VOG, I'M GETTING A PROXIMITY ALERT. WE HAVE AN UNIDENTIFIED CRAFT APPROACHING FAST!
THAT'S A PIRATE SHIP, THAX! WE CAN'T LET THEM GET THE CARGO. THE COLLECTOR WILL HAVE OUR HEADS!
THAT'S NOT JUST ANY PIRATE, VOG...
CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM
...IT'S NEBULA! OPEN FIRE!
LISTEN UP, SHIP, I WANT YOU TO HOLD THIS EXACT SPEED AND TRAJECTORY. GOT IT?
AFFIRMATIVE, CAPTAIN NEBULA.
POOM
BOUGHT THIS OFF AN OLD MERC AT HIS RETIREMENT SALE. IT BETTER WORK OR I'M GOING TO HUNT HIM DOWN ON WHATEVER BACKWATER PLANET HE CRAWLED BACK TO AND PUT HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY.
CHOK


OH, #$%#!

GOING IN. SHIP, REMEMBER, HOLD THIS POSITION!
I AM NOT PROGRAMMED TO FORGET.


REMIND ME TO REPROGRAM YOU TO BE TEN PERCENT LESS OF A SMART-ASS. I KNEW I NEVER SHOULD HAVE FIRED MY CREW AND GONE AUTOPILOT.
SHRACK

UNGH!

SEALING HULL. BOOTS WERE ONLY GOOD FOR ONE BURN, SO I'LL BE COMING BACK OUT THE HARD WAY.
BLEEP

ARE YOU A COMPLETE FOOL, NEBULA?! THE COLLECTOR HIRED US! HE'LL SKIN YOU ALIVE IF YOU TAKE HIS CARGO!
CHOOM
SHRACK
I KNOW EXACTLY WHO HIRED YOU TWO MORONS. YOU UNDERBID ME FOR THE JOB.
AND THAT'S WHY THE COLLECTOR WILL PAY ME TWICE AS MUCH AS MY ORIGINAL BID TO GET THIS BACK.
IT'S A DEATH'S WEB SECURITY RIG, SHIP. I REMOVE THE CARGO WITHOUT THE CODE AND THE SHIP SELF-DESTRUCTS.
:SIGH: I REALLY SHOULD HAVE TORTURED THOSE TWO FOR THE CODE.
OH WELL, LIVE AND LEARN, RIGHT? COME TO MAMA.

HERE I COME, SHIP!
BLEEP
FWOOSH
YOU BETTER BE THERE!
THUMP
UNGH!
STARFOX?!
NEBULA! FUNNY RUNNING INTO YOU HERE, YOU LITTLE SCAMP, YOU.
AS MUCH AS I'D LOVE TO JUST FLOAT HERE AND CATCH UP, MY ILL-TEMPERED FRIEND OVER THERE IS RATHER IMPATIENT.
SO, FANCY A LITTLE ROAD TRIP TO TITAN?
FINE. I'LL GO. BUT THIS SHIP IS ABOUT TO EXPLODE SO I SUGGEST WE LEAVE NOW.

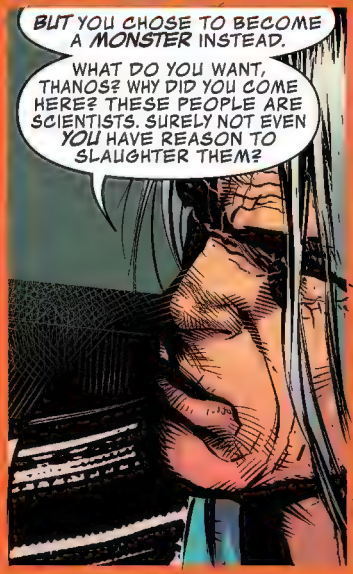
AND, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, AT THE EDGES OF THE SHI'AR EMPIRE, ANOTHER SPACECRAFT LANDS ON THE TINY MOON OF GILGRATH.
TWO SOLAR CYCLES AGO, GILGRATH BECAME THE HOME OF ONE OF THE MOST CUTTING-EDGE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FACILITIES IN THE UNIVERSE. SCIENTISTS GATHERED FROM AROUND THE GALAXY TO WORK HERE UNDER SHI'AR PROTECTION.
THIS IS THE LAST PLACE ANYONE WOULD EVER EXPECT THANOS TO COME. YET HERE HE IS. BUT FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
STAY HERE.
WAIT, YOU CAN'T JUST-- ARRRGH!
SHRACK
YES. I CAN.
THANOS!
HELLO, FATHER.

WHAT IS THE MATTER, MENTOR? ARE YOU NOT PLEASED TO SEE ME?
PLEASED?

PTOO!

HEH. THERE ARE MANY THINGS I COULD ACCUSE YOU OF BEING, OLD MAN, BUT CLEARLY A COWARD IS NOT ONE OF THEM.

WHAT YOU HAVE BUILT HERE IS IMPRESSIVE.
YOU KNOW, YOU AND I ARE NOT SO DIFFERENT, FATHER. ONCE, I TOO THOUGHT I WOULD BE A SCIENTIST LIKE YOU. BUT...


BUT YOU CHOSE TO BECOME A MONSTER INSTEAD.
WHAT DO YOU WANT, THANOS? WHY DID YOU COME HERE? THESE PEOPLE ARE SCIENTISTS. SURELY NOT EVEN YOU HAVE REASON TO SLAUGHTER THEM?

YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, I AM A MONSTER. I NEED NO REASON.

NO, THESE SCIENTISTS MEAN NOTHING TO ME. I AM HERE FOR *YOU*, MENTOR. I AM HERE BECAUSE SOMETHING IS *WRONG*... DEEP INSIDE OF ME. AND I NEED YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS.

YOU ARE SICK? *YOU?*

YES. AS IMPOSSIBLE AS IT WOULD SEEM. EVEN NOW I FEEL MYSELF *WEAKENING*. AND EVEN I CANNOT DETERMINE WHAT AILS ME, MENTOR.

SCIENCE IS NO STRANGER TO ME, BUT IN MY FAILURE I WAS FORCED TO ADMIT THAT *YOU* ARE MY SUPERIOR IN THIS *ONE REGARD*.

HAH! SO YOU WANT *MY* HELP?! IF YOU THINK I WOULD EVER HELP YOU, THANOS, THEN YOU REALLY ARE THE *MAD* TITAN. YOU KILLED MY WIFE, *YOUR OWN MOTHER!*

YOU ANNIHILATED TITAN AND EVERYONE ON IT. YOU HAVE ENSLAVED ENTIRE WORLDS! AND THESE HORRORS WERE JUST THE BEGINNING FOR YOU. THE BLOOD OF MILLIONS OF OTHERS STAINS YOUR SOUL. I WILL GLADLY WATCH YOU DIE...*SON.*

THEN I AM NOT THE ONLY ONE YOU WILL WATCH DIE TODAY. LET ME TELL YOU WHAT IS HAPPENING OUTSIDE OF THIS LAB AT THIS VERY MOMENT...

"EVERYONE LIVING IN THIS FACILITY IS ATTEMPTING TO FLEE. YET THEY WILL SOON REALIZE THAT MY MEN HAVE ALREADY DISABLED ALL OF THE SPACECRAFT ON THIS MOON.

"AT THIS VERY MOMENT THEY ARE COMING TO REALIZE THAT THERE *IS* NO ESCAPE."

SO, YOU WILL DO WHAT I ASK. YOU WILL HELP ME. OR I WILL SLAUGHTER EVERY SCIENTIST ON THIS MOON AND THEIR FAMILIES--

--AND LEAVE YOU ALIVE TO WADE THROUGH THEIR CORPSES.

THANOS' WORDS ARE NO MERE THREAT. HE IS CALLED THE LIFE ENDER FOR A REASON. LOOK NO FURTHER THAN THE DERELICT MOON OF TITAN, ONCE HOME TO A THRIVING CITY OF ETERNALS.
SO, WHAT WAS IN THAT LITTLE BOX YOU STOLE ANYWAY, NEBULA?
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW.
IT WAS THANOS HIMSELF WHO CARVED HIS BLOODY SIGNATURE ACROSS TITAN'S SURFACE AND NOW IT IS AN ALL-BUT-FORGOTTEN WASTELAND.

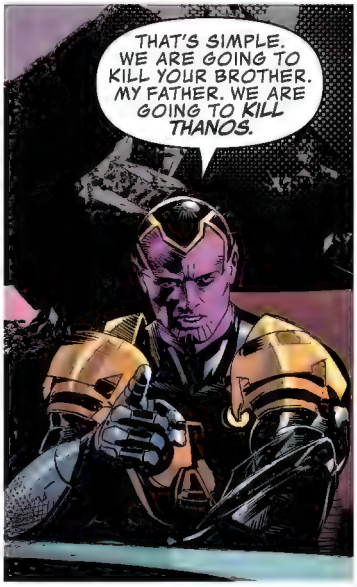
YES. I WOULD, THAT'S WHY I ASKED, MY DEAR. YOU KNOW THAT CHIP YOU WEAR ON YOUR SHOULDER IS AWFULLY UNATTRACTIVE. IT DOES NOTHING FOR YOU.
NOT ALL OF US ARE SO CONCERNED WITH OUR LOOKS. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE YOU TO PUT YOUR HAIR IN THOSE LITTLE POINTS EACH MORNING ANYWAY, STARFOX?

WOULD YOU TWO SHUT UP?! WE'RE ALMOST THERE.
ALMOST WHERE? I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET YOU TWO TALK ME INTO COMING TO THIS GRAVEYARD.

IT WILL BE WORTH IT, NEBULA. TRUST ME.
THANE. I DON'T BELIEVE WE'VE YET HAD THE PLEASURE, NEPHEW.
OUR MEETING IS A LONG TIME COMING, EROS. PLEASE, SIT. WE HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT.

I'LL STAND.
OF COURSE YOU WILL. GOD FORBID YOU DO ANYTHING THAT ISN'T CONTRARY.
I, ON THE OTHER HAND, AM MORE THAN HAPPY TO ENJOY YOUR HOSPITALITY, SUCH AS IT IS, NEPHEW.

I'VE HEARD MUCH ABOUT YOU. NOT EXACTLY THE APPLE OF YOUR FATHER'S EYE. THOUGH I SUPPOSE THAT'S A COMPLIMENT.
SO TELL ME, WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT US TO TITAN?


THAT'S SIMPLE. WE ARE GOING TO KILL YOUR BROTHER. MY FATHER. WE ARE GOING TO *KILL THANOS.*

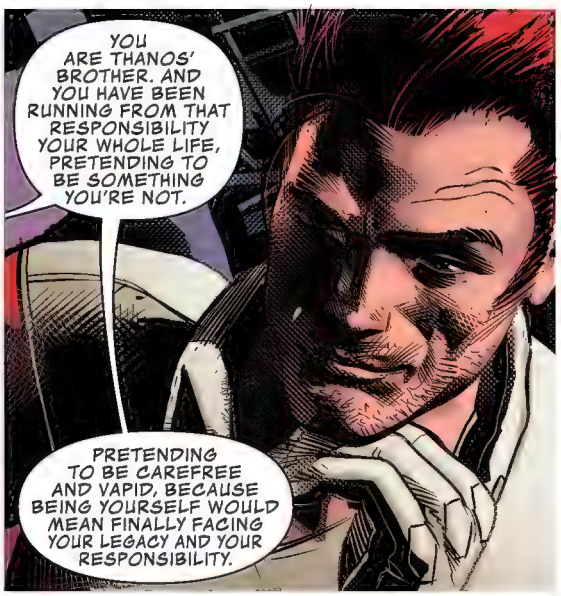
HAH! WELL, YOU DO HAVE YOUR FATHER'S PRODIGIOUS SENSE OF AMBITION. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT, THANE.
THAT'S MADNESS. THE GALAXY IS LITTERED WITH THE GRAVES OF ALL THOSE WHO'VE TRIED TO KILL THANOS. IT'S A FOOL'S ERRAND.

SHUT UP AND AT LEAST LISTEN TO WHAT THE BOY HAS TO SAY! THINGS HAVE CHANGED. THANOS IS *VULNERABLE.*

TRYCO IS RIGHT. AS UNBELIEVABLE AS IT MAY SOUND, I HAVE LEARNED THAT MY FATHER IS DYING--GETTING WEAKER BY THE DAY. EVEN NOW HE SEARCHES THE UNIVERSE FOR SOME CURE.
AND BEFORE HE FINDS ONE, OR SOME WAY TO PROLONG HIS WRETCHED LIFE, WE HAVE TO STRIKE.

AND WHY US? IN ALL THE UNIVERSE, WHY DID YOU BRING THE *THREE OF US* HERE?
THAT'S THE QUESTION, ISN'T IT, NEBULA? I THOUGHT LONG AND HARD ABOUT THIS. THE MORE PEOPLE I INCLUDED, THE GREATER THE CHANCE OF THIS PLAN FALLING APART. IT NEEDS TO BE A SMALL, SURGICAL STRIKE.

EROS, YOU WERE THE FIRST PERSON I THOUGHT OF.
I'M FLATTERED. AND WHY IS THAT, NEPHEW? DO TELL.


YOU ARE THANOS' BROTHER. AND YOU HAVE BEEN RUNNING FROM THAT RESPONSIBILITY YOUR WHOLE LIFE, PRETENDING TO BE SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT.
PRETENDING TO BE CAREFREE AND VAPID, BECAUSE BEING YOURSELF WOULD MEAN FINALLY FACING YOUR LEGACY AND YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

AND WHO AM I REALLY THEN, THANE?
YOU ARE A HERO AT HEART. ONCE, YOU WERE *STARFOX, THE AVENGER.* IT IS TIME TO BECOME THAT ONCE AGAIN.

AND YOU, NEBULA, YOU ARE ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS WOMEN IN THE UNIVERSE. BUT THAT HAS NEVER BEEN ENOUGH FOR YOU, HAS IT?
YOU WANTED SO BADLY TO BE FEARED THAT YOU ACTUALLY CLAIMED TO BE THANOS' *GRANDDAUGHTER.* YOU WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE IMPORTANT. TO BE FEARED.

AND WHAT DID THANOS DO IN RETURN? HE TWISTED YOUR NEED TO BELONG TO HIM. HE ABUSED IT AND USED YOU, THEN CAST YOU ASIDE. NOW YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A PETTY THIEF.

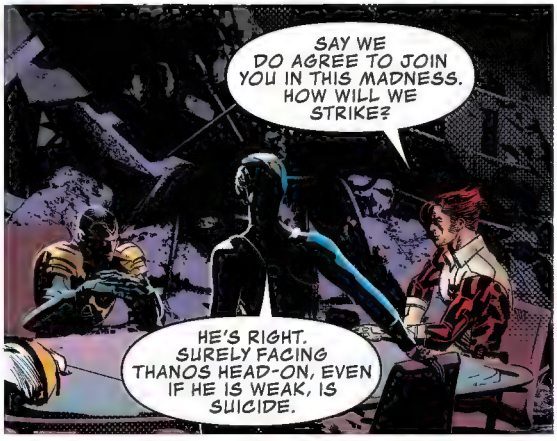
PFFT! GREAT SPEECH, THANE. BUT I'M NOT BUYING IT.
JUST THINK, YOU COULD NEVER JOIN THANOS, BUT TO *DEFEAT* HIM...THAT WOULD TRULY BRING YOU GREATNESS.

AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, "CHAMPION OF THE UNIVERSE"? YOU HAVE BEEN AWFULLY QUIET OVER THERE, TRYCO. WHAT'S YOUR ROLE IN ALL OF THIS?
I--I HAVE A DEBT TO REPAY THE BOY. LEAVE IT AT THAT, EROS. I WISH NOT TO SPEAK OF IT ANY FURTHER.

BUT BEYOND THAT, THANE IS RIGHT. TO BEAT THE MAD TITAN, THE LIFE ENDER, TO KILL THANOS--WELL... THAT WOULD TRULY MAKE ME A CHAMPION.

I HAVE HEARD THAT YOU ARE POWERFUL IN YOUR OWN RIGHT, THANE. IF THANOS IS TRULY WEAK, WHY DO YOU NEED US TO FINISH HIM?
MY POWER IS NOT WHAT IT ONCE WAS. BUT THAT IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER DAY, UNCLE. I CAN'T FACE THANOS ALONE.
I NEED ALL OF YOU.

SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY? DO YOU WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR DAYS STEALING CARGO FROM TWO-BIT BOUNTY HUNTERS?
DO YOU WANT TO WASTE YOUR LIVES WHORING AND DRINKING AND WASTING AWAY IN BROTHELS?
OR DO YOU WANT TO BE SOMETHING MORE? DO YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING GREAT?


SAY WE DO AGREE TO JOIN YOU IN THIS MADNESS. HOW WILL WE STRIKE?
HE'S RIGHT. SURELY FACING THANOS HEAD-ON, EVEN IF HE IS WEAK, IS SUICIDE.

YOU'RE BOTH RIGHT. THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE WE'LL NEED. SOMETHING THAT I NEED YOU TO STEAL...
...FROM TERRAX THE TERRIBLE.

AND, AS THIS UNLIKELY NEW CABAL PLOTS HIS DOWNFALL, THANOS IS ABOUT TO LEARN HIS FATE.
HRRM...
I TIRE OF YOUR GRUNTING AND GROANING. WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND?
I'VE NOT SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT. RAPID CELLULAR ENTROPY MORE AGGRESSIVE THAN ANY ILLNESS I HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED.
YOUR BODY IS LITERALLY EATING ITSELF AT A MOLECULAR LEVEL. I WOULD NEVER HAVE THOUGHT SUCH A THING POSSIBLE WITH YOUR BIOLOGY.
IT IS LIKE-- WELL, IT'S LIKE SOME SORT OF GOD CANCER.
HOW LONG?
HOW LONG? AT THIS RATE, I'D SAY YOU HAVE LITTLE MORE THAN A COUPLE OF WEEKS. AND EVEN THAT MAY BE GENEROUS.
NO! I MEANT HOW LONG DO YOU NEED TO FIND A CURE?

"A CURE"? ARE YOU SERIOUS? IT WOULD TAKE YEARS, DECADES EVEN, JUST TO STUDY YOUR DEVIANT BIOLOGY AND ISOLATE THE CAUSE OF THE ILLNESS, LET ALONE TO START DEVELOPING SOME SORT OF TREATMENT.
THERE MUST BE A WAY!
WITH TIME, PERHAPS. BUT YOU DO NOT HAVE TIME. YOU ARE DYING, THANOS. THERE IS NO STOPPING IT.
THEN YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELF TO BE QUITE A DISAPPOINTMENT, MENTOR.
D-DISAPPOINTMENT?! HA! HOW DO YOU THINK I HAVE FELT ALL THESE YEARS? WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WAS LIKE TO SIRE A BEAST? E-EVERY LIFE YOU TOOK, I HAVE FELT RESPONSIBLE!
YOU MAY BE EVIL, THANOS, BUT I AM THE SOURCE OF THAT EVIL. YOU ARE MY FAULT.
I USED TO WISH YOU HAD DIED IN THE WOMB, THANOS. BUT NOW...NOW I WISH I WOULD HAVE SMOTHERED YOU IN YOUR CRIB. AT LEAST THEN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MY OWN HANDS THAT ENDED YOU.
I'M GLAD YOU ARE DYING, THANOS. I ONLY WISH I COULD WATCH YOU ROT AND DIE ALONE.
YOU KNOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YOUR PATHETIC LIFE...

...YOU ACTUALLY SOUND LIKE MY FATHER.
KKT!

WHA--?
SHRAK

THANOS OF TITAN, YOU ARE UNDER ARREST BY AUTHORITY OF THE SHI'AR IMPERIAL GUARD.
STAND DOWN, OR DIE.
NEXT: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK!

NEXT ISSUE:

Do you dare attempt to address Thanos? Send letters to **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM** and mark "okay to print"!